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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [HK](#) [CH](#)  
SUBJECT: HONG KONG TRANSITION PROJECT POLL FINDS SUPPORT  
FOR DONALD TSANG'S RE-ELECTION -- IN A CONTESTED ELECTION

Classified By: E/P Chief Simon Schuchat. Reasons: 1.4(b,d).

1. (SBU) During a May 3 press conference, Researcher Michael DeGolyer announced the results of a poll conducted by the Hong Kong Transition Project and commissioned by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), a U.S. NGO. The poll, "Parties, Policies and Political Reform in Hong Kong," was conducted in February and March to gauge the public's attitudes towards governance issues, constitutional reform, and political parties. The survey found that 71 percent of the respondents supported a direct election for Chief Executive and over 90 percent supported a competitive CE election. Despite this strong approval for a contested election, two-thirds of the respondents supported Donald Tsang's re-election as Chief Executive.

2. (SBU) DeGolyer contended that attitudes towards the Government's electoral reform proposals had also changed in the past few months. In November, prior to the December 2005 Legislative Council vote, respondents were evenly divided, with 39 percent supporting the proposal and 37 percent opposed to them. When asked who they would blame if the constitutional reform proposals failed, a higher proportion of the respondents blamed Donald Tsang (58 percent) than the democrats (42 percent). However, when the same question was asked in February, a higher proportion of the respondents assigned blame to the democrats (50 percent), than to Tsang (34 percent). Separately, support for political parties remained weak, with only twelve percent of those surveyed considering themselves supporters of a political advocacy group.

3. (C) On May 4, China Program Director of NDI Christine Chung told poloff that she did not necessarily agree with all of the conclusions drawn from the survey by DeGolyer. With regard to his analysis that more people were supportive of the electoral reform package, Chung said that the respondents had changed their minds because they had "figured out the proposals were the best that the Government was going to offer." She added that the failure of the democrats to come up with an alternative plan to the constitutional reform proposals was probably another reason why the public might be assigning more blame to the pan-democrats at this time.  
Cunningham